

FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

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FILM A CIA THRILLER

BETSY ASHTON: Don't be surprised if Burt Lancaster passes you on the street in the next few days, or Paul Scofield, or Alain Delon. These actors are in town filming Scorpio. Today all the action was on "O" Street in Georgetown.

This is Betsy Ashton. This morning I was there. The street was blocked off. It was filled with cameras and people -- film people as well as spectators. And one big black Cadillac.

I asked Director Michael Winner (?) about the action.

MICHAEL WINNER: We're doing a little car crash there, where somebody goes into a car. But the stunt man went in with such enthusiasm he broke the window of the Cadillac, and we then brought in another car and wanted him to break a little more of it, and he didn't. Anyway we're shovelling Cadillacs into the air like mad now.

ASHTON: Well making films is not an easy process. It takes quite a bit of time. How long do you think it's going to take to get the scene just as you want it?

WINNER: Well I think it will probably take all day and it will (words inaudible).

ASHTON: How long do you plan to be in Georgetown, Mr. Winner?

WINNER: Well I think actually in Georgetown, we're here I think one other day, and throughout Washington for two weeks.

ASHTON: While Winner ordered the next film take I talked with other members of the crew.

You're Richard Maber (?), and you are in charge of publicity for the film. Can you tell us a little bit about the film?

RICHARD MABER: Well it's been a nice film for us because we travelled to Washington, London, Vienna, Paris at the best times of the year in each city. No question that it's hard work. It's a four or five million dollar CIA thriller in that it's an intelligence spy film. Burt Lancaster does not have magic rays in his left hand coat pocket, or anything. We tried to get it as real as possible.

ASHTON: You're standing here with a bull horn.

MAN: Americans call it a bull horn. It's what we call a loud hailer.

ASHTON: And just what is your job?

MAN: I'm the assistant director.

ASHTON: And you yell at people.

MAN: Basically I yell at people. You could sum up my job by saying I was a sergeant major. I'm responsible for coordinating actors, the transportation, everything else, to make sure we get to the right place at the right time.

ASHTON: Now a man is lying in the middle of the street, who is the stunt man, lying right in front of the Cadillac. The film crews have moved to the front of the car, the director's chair with Michael Winner written on it has been moved behind the cameras, the crowd has been pushed around to the front, and the shooting will go on.

Many Georgetown residents and shoppers were standing behind the ropes watching the action and waiting to see the stars, but certainly not getting much shopping done. Did the store owners complain? Not the ones I talked to. After all, as one owner told me, wait till the film is released. That will be my store and my sign in living color on the big screen.

This is Betsy Ashton reporting.